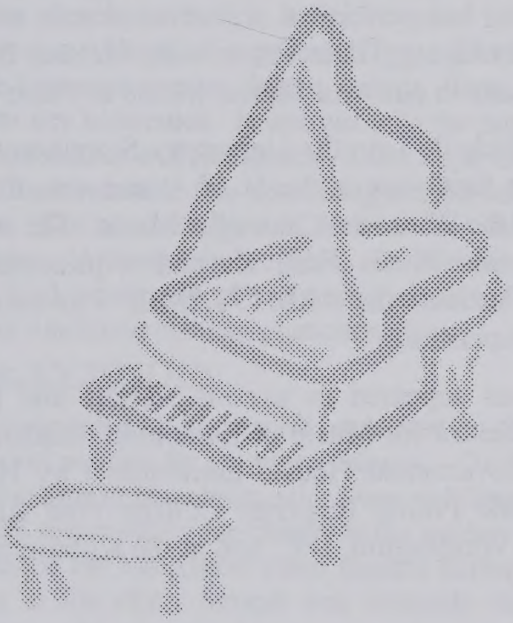
Department of Music
University of Alberta

Michelle Santiago,

piano



Friday, March 21, 2003
at 8:00 p.m.

Convocation Hall

Arts Building
University of Alberta

Michelle Marie Santiago

Michelle Marie Santiago was born in Edmonton in 1982 and began her music studies at the Alberta College Conservatory of Music (Early Childhood Program) in 1984. She was accepted into the piano studio of Dr. Ernesto Lejano in 1993 and received the ARCT Diploma (Performer) in piano from the Royal Conservatory (Toronto) in 1998. Currently, she is in her fourth year of the Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance program at the University of Alberta studying with Dr. Jacques Després. In the summer, Michelle studies at the Aspen Music School and Festival in Aspen, Colorado with the world-renowned piano pedagogue, John Perry. She has also participated at the Eastman Music Festival and Competition sponsored by the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. In addition, Michelle has had the privilege of working with Dr. Joachim Segger, Jean-David Coen and Antoinette Perry and has performed at master classes conducted by Thomas Schumacher, Angela Cheng, Daan Vandewalle, Helmut Brauss and Alexandra Munn. Michelle plans to pursue a Master Music in Piano Performance.

In 1999, Michelle won the University Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition in her first year at the U of A and was the featured soloist at Music Makers II at the Winspear Centre for Music. She is a consistent winner at Edmonton Kiwanis Music Festivals and a prizewinner at the Alberta Provincial Music Festival, the ARMTA/AMEF Provincial and the CFMTA National Piano Competitions.

Michelle has appeared in various recitals and performances at the Francis Winspear Centre for Music in Edmonton, Eckhardt-Gramatte Hall in Calgary, Alberta Government House, Edmonton City Hall, Alberta College Muttart Hall, Grande Prairie Regional College Fine Arts Recital Hall, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and at the Kilburn and Eastman Halls in Rochester, N.Y.

Michelle is a recipient of numerous scholarships including Beryl Barns Memorial Undergraduate Awards, a William and Mary Hawrysh Memorial Leadership Scholarship, Universiade '83 scholarships, a Faculty of Arts Achievement Award, Bessie Brooks Winspear Scholarships, Peace River Pioneer Memorial Scholarships in Music, Dr. Ernesto Lejano Scholarship in Piano Performance, Abigal Edith Condell Memorial Scholarship in Music, Tommy Banks and Marek Jablonski Awards, Jason Lang, Louise McKinney, Alexander Rutherford academic scholarships and Aspen Music School scholarships. Michelle is a member of the Golden Key National Honor Society and a past president of the U of A Music Students Association.

Program Notes

Prelude and Fugue No. 9 in E Major, The Well-Tempered Clavier Book I, BWV 854 (1722)

Johann Sebastian Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier is considered to be one the pillars of Western music. In Bach's own words, "The Well-Tempered Clavier . . . was for the profit and use of musical youth desirous of learning and especially for the pastime of those already skilled in this study." It has directly influenced development of western music through its influence on composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Mendelssohn and Shostakovich. Its two volumes that go through all 24 major and minor keys occupy a central role in the musical studies of all pianists to this day. Hans von Bülow called the 48 Preludes and Fugues the "Pianists' Old Testament" (with Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas making up the "New Testament"). Robert Schumann considered it the "Pianists' Daily Bread".

The prelude in E major showcases Bach's ability to write sublime, comforting music. This prelude evokes visions of a peaceful, quiet pastoral scene and yet creates interest through harmonic tension. In the prelude, Bach accomplishes this through the use of minor key harmonies. In contrast with the prelude, the fugue in E major exhibits great exuberance and confidence. It is a fugue in three voices with the subject starting with a memorable two-note rising second interval followed by running sixteenth notes. The countersubject is derived from subject motives and undergoes transformation. Although quite short, the Prelude and Fugue in E certainly accomplishes Bach's intention of composing music not only for teaching but also for enjoyment of musicians and non-musicians alike.

Piano Sonata in D Major, KV 311 (1777)

In 1777-79, Mozart, accompanied by his mother, embarked on an extended trip to Paris hoping to find a good position for the young Mozart. On their way to Paris, they stayed for quite some time in Mannheim, which was well known at the time for a court orchestra that was spearheading the change to the modern orchestral sound. KV 309 and 311 are called the Mannheim piano sonatas having been written by Mozart during his stay at the city. Mozart was evidently deeply affected by Mannheim. This period may be considered his coming of age in his compositional style. The Sonata in D Major, KV 311 exhibits aspects of the mannered Mannheim style as evidenced by contrasts in texture, tone color and dynamic levels.

The first movement is in sonata form and incorporates ideas from the Mannheim composers and Haydn. The Allegro in D major opens with a theme featuring solid chords on the left hand accompanied by right hand figurations. The rhythmic intensity increases in the development section with rapid changes in piano and forte dynamics. The recapitulation is unusual in that the themes are presented in reverse of the usual sonata order. The second theme in the tonic is presented first followed by the first theme. The movement ends with a brief coda.

The Andante movement is a slow-movement rondo form (without a development) in the key of G. It opens with a vocal style theme and features large dynamic contrasts.

The third movement, Rondeau, is an allegro of youthful vitality. It is written in the style of a piano concerto third movement. A cadenza immediately precedes the final return of the rondo theme.

Four Mazurkas, Op. 17 (1832-33)

The mazurka plays a central role in Polish music. The Polish national anthem is a mazurka. Chopin had a special attachment to the mazurka. He composed music of the genre very early in his composing career to the end of his life. Chopin mazurkas are based on three Polish dances namely the fast *oberek*, the moderate *mazur* or *mazurek* and the slow *kujawiak*. These are folk dances of people living in the Mazovian plains of central Poland. The mazurka eventually became a favorite in the courts of Poland and throughout all Europe. Chopin's mazurkas usually combine fragments of these dance styles. In mazurka music, accents on the second or third beats tend to a blur the feel of the meter.

A feature of mazurka folk music is the solo instrument singing the melody above a middle voice instrument and the dudy or duda, a Polish version of the bagpipe maintaining a drone background. Chopin employed repetitive open fifth chords to simulate the drone of the bagpipe in some of his mazurkas,

Opus 17 was written soon after Chopin left Poland for Paris. He would never return to his beloved homeland. Although it opens with a rather ebullient mazurka, on the whole, Op. 17 presents a more subdued side of Chopin. Perhaps it is an expression of his homesickness and loneliness with the realization that he may not see his beloved Poland ever again.

No. 1 in Bb Major (Vivo e risoluto): The first piece of Op. 17 is very aristocratic and conjures images from a grand ballroom festivity. This mazurka is the most extroverted of the set.

No. 2 in E minor (Lento non troppo): In the second of the set in E minor Chopin exudes a quiet pride. The opening theme is based on the kujawiak and is reflective in mood.

No. 3 in Ab Major (Legato assai): The musical ideas of this mazurka alternate in style. This mazurka spins out music of quiet elegance and dignity.

No. 4 in A minor (Lento ma non troppo): This mazurka starts with a 4-bar introduction that oscillates between the Aeolian, Dorian and Lydian modes. Only in the 13th measure cadence, significantly past the beginning of the first dance, is the A minor tonality firmly established. This first dance is a very slow kujawiak with a very sad and mournful character. Chopin did not object when it was nicknamed the "The Mourner". The central trio is characterized by a drone of the open fifth bass. The piece does not end with a cadence. The introduction returns after the final cadence. The effect of bookending this A minor composition with tonally vague sections (the last chord is F major in first inversion) gives a dreamy, ethereal feeling to this very stark piece. This mazurka is the most played and recorded of the four making up Op. 17.

Barcarolle in F# Major, Op. 60 (1845-46)

The Barcarolle, Op. 60 is a masterpiece of exploration of new harmonies by Chopin. Written in the style of a Venetian boat song, it features an undulating left hand accompaniment depicting the gentle bobbing of a gondola on the famed Venetian canals and a very Italianate melody. The piece presents both technical and musical difficulties that led Walter Gieseking to comment that "life is too short to learn how to play the Barcarolle." Technically, the main difficulty lies in the double-note or chordal writing of the melody which presents challenges in proper voicing and legato playing. Its harmonic complexity and continuously changing key center make it difficult for the performer to present its structural and formal unity. And yet, Chopin succeeds in creating a masterpiece with the most beautiful musical moments. The Barcarolle is one of Chopin's greatest creations. Maurice Ravel characterized it as "the poetry of intense despair." The Barcarolle was the last piece Chopin played in public. It is reported that in his last public performance, Chopin played the ending in a pianissimo dynamic instead of the forte indicated in the score and yet those present report that it sounded as if that was the way Chopin conceived it from the start.

Dita Correnti (1996)

Dita Correnti is part of a set of works composed by U of A professor of music, Howard Bashaw and commissioned by the CBC Music Department. The title is Italian for "Running Fingers" which describes the perpetual motion characteristic of the work. Instead of having a home key or tonal center as in common practice works, this modern work uses a calm rhythmic pattern instead. Returns to this "home pattern" bring the sense of rest and security after excursions to more agitated rhythmic patterns. The work uses the extremes of the keyboard.

Transcendental Etude No. 10 in F minor (1851-52)

The *Études d'exécution transcendante* are a set of 12 studies dedicated by Liszt to his teacher, Carl Czerny, who is mainly known today as Beethoven's student and composer of hundreds of piano studies. Liszt was never quite fully satisfied with many of his works. He revised and modified numerous works throughout his life, and the Transcendental Etudes are no exception. There are actually three versions of the etudes – the first version of his youth, a very difficult second version of his virtuoso years and deemed unplayable by many pianists, and a third, more mature 1852 version which is the one we hear today in concerts and recordings. These Etudes are technically very challenging and to every serious pianist a step in the Gradus ad Parnassum that each must climb.

The F minor transcendental etude marked Allegro, agitato molto, opens with rapid downward cascading notes played by overlapped hands before leading to the passionate and imploring theme. Its many sections are designed to help the pianist master a particular technical skill. Quick crescendos and decrescendos give it a surging feeling, and suggest turbulent emotions especially at the end of the piece.

Valses nobles et sentimentales (1911)

The *Valses nobles et sentimentales* consists of seven stylized waltzes and an epilogue played without pause. French composer, Maurice Ravel derived the title

from two Schubert genres: "*Valses n*obles" and another called "*Valses sentimentales*". "The title *Valses nobles et sentimentales* sufficiently indicates my intention of writing a series of waltzes in imitation of Schubert... The seventh waltz seems to me to be the most characteristic."

As to Ravel's purpose in composing the work, it is sufficient to note his quotation in the score of Henri de Régnier -- ". . . le plaisir délicieux et toujours nouveau d'une occupation inutile" (the delightful and always novel pleasure of a useless occupation).

Ravel used the medium of stylized waltzes to create music rich in new harmonies and textures. The dissonances and chromaticism of the opening waltz proclaim that it definitely belongs to the 20th and not the 19th century. The second waltz which may be classified as sentimental is introspective "avec une expression intense". The sentimental third movement uses hemiola to achieve rhythmic variety and carries over to the fourth movement but with a greater texture and harmonic variety. The mood becomes quite personal in the flowing fifth dance (*dans un sentiment intime*). The hemiolas return in the sixth waltz. The seventh movement reprises the preceding waltzes before transforming into a Viennese waltz. The epilogue is a look back at the whole suite, calming any disturbances created earlier and finally ends with the piano sound quietly dying away to nothingness.

The work was first performed in an event sponsored by the Independent Musical Society (Paris) in which new music was performed without naming the composer. This was left to the audience to guess. The work was not well received and very few guessed Ravel as the work's composer. Ravel orchestrated *Valses nobles et sentimentales* for ballet in 1912.

Goyescas (1912)

The fiery temperament of Spanish music is wonderfully encapsulated in *Goyescas*, a suite of piano works that the great Spanish romantic composer, Enrique Granados, wrote after being inspired by the paintings of Spanish painter Francisco Goya. The work has the subtitle "Los Majos Enamorados" (The Majos in Love). Granados later wrote an opera of the same title based on this piano suite.

Quejas o la maja y el ruiseñor (Laments or The Maiden and the Nightingale), the fourth work of the *Goyescas*, is a supreme example of the elegance of romantic Spanish art song (*tonadilla)*. It is the most often performed of the cycle. The music portrays a maiden complaining about life and love to a nightingale. Near the end of the piece, the nightingale bursts forth "with the jealousy of a wife, not with the sadness of a widow." The piece is dedicated to his wife.

The opera of the same title perhaps illustrates the imagery of the third work of the suite "*El fandango del candil* (Fandango by Lamp Light)". Young men (los majos) and women are in a dance with fandango music playing in the background. Two young men interested in and encouraged by the same young lady get into a fight. The crowd separates them and they agree to meet later to settle matters. As they leave the crowd resumes the dance.

Program

Prelude and Fugue No. 9 in E (1722) — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Well-Tempered Clavier Book I, BWV 854

Sonata in D Major, KV 311 (1777) — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

I. *Allegro con spirito*
II. *Andante con espressione*
III *Rondeau: Allegro*

Four Mazurkas, Op. 17 (1832-1833) — Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

No. 1 in Bb Major
No. 2 in E minor
No. 3 in Ab Major
No. 4 in A minor

Barcarolle, Op. 60 in F# Major (1845-1846) — Frédéric Chopin

Intermission

Dita Correnti (1996) — Howard Bashaw (b. 1957)
Commissioned by CBC Radio Music Department

Transcendental Etude No. 10 in F minor (1851-52) — Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Valses nobles et sentimentales (1911) — Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

1. *Modéré - très franc*
2. *Assez lent - avec une expression intense*
3. *Modéré*
4. *Assez animé*
5. *Presque lent - dans un sentiment intime*
6. *Vif*
7. *Moins vif*
8. *Epilogue - lent*

From Goyescas (1912 and 1914) — Enrique Granados (1867-1916)

4. *Quejas o La maja y el ruiseñor*
3. *El fandango del candil*

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music Degree for Ms Santiago.

Reception to follow in the Arts Lounge.

Acknowledgments

Department of Music, University of Alberta

Dr. Jacques Després

Dr. Patricia Tao

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Winfield Miclat

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